

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cowper.*



THE DRILL-SERGEANT.

THE TALL MAN.

CHAPTER V.—BARRACK LIFE.

IN the barrack-yard a row of very tall men were standing one behind the other on one leg like ganders. Their other leg was stretched out behind them in such a way that it was raised horizontally in the air from the knee. It often happened that the tall men lost their balance after a time, swayed to one side or the other, and at last, to save themselves

from falling, were obliged to put down the raised foot which had been extended out. This gave the drill-master Wimmer the opportunity of giving them a sound rating. He called the recruits lubbers and blockheads, stupid apes, idiotic fellows, cattle, and simpletons. He told them that geese could stand on one leg better than they could, and that the street-boys of Berlin would be more teachable. He ordered them how to turn their eyes, their heads, their arms, their legs. "Heads up!" he shouted, and

chucked the recruit Lane under the chin with a thump that made his teeth chatter. "Stand at ease," he cried to another, while he gave him a dig behind the knees, which made them double up. "Stomach in!"—"Chest out," he said to others, giving to one a blow on the body, to another a thrust in the back, and to a third such a fillip on the nose that the tears came into the poor fellow's eyes. Children of all ages stood around, attentive spectators, convulsed with laughter when the drill-master treated his subordinates so harshly. The latter were obliged to bear ill-usage patiently, without moving a muscle or uttering an impatient word. "Halt!"—"Attention!" Wimmer shouted to his recruits, who were marching to his loud counting. They stood silent, and like an immovable wall.

"Eyes right!—right!" ordered Wimmer. "Right foot forward! Eyes straight—march! Twenty-one! Twenty-two! Twenty-one! Twenty-two!—Halt! Now tell me, Lane, you nine-and-ninety times block-head! where you are turning your eyes to. Instead of looking straight before you, as I ordered you, you are squinting out towards the forge. Were you originally a sweep, and are you longing for the soot and the chimney? Mind what you are at; must I thrash your long back? As sure as that I shall some day be lieutenant-general of the infantry, in all my life I never saw a stupider hop-pole than you are! You seem as though you were always dreaming. You ought to be at home with your mammy. Lane! Lane! my patience is at an end!"

Lane had become perfectly pale. The muscles of his face worked convulsively, and his eyebrows were contracted threateningly. Soon he turned deep red, indicating stormy gusts of resentment.

Wimmer observed the change.

"You mean to be disagreeable in performing your drill!" he said, spitefully. "You had better try! You think that because I passed over your throwing the pitcher at me, that I shall put up with still more from you? You do not know me yet, Lane!"

"My name is Hiebendahl, not Lane," replied the merchant, with suppressed rage.

"Do not excite yourself, my friend," said Wimmer, "here you are Lane; and you will remain Lane, and that is enough! Stand at ease!"

The recruits stood at ease for a short time—that is to say, they were so far masters of their own bodies that they might move them naturally. But they remained quiet, sometimes looking at their drill-master, sometimes at each other, or at the children who were standing round, with a sorrowful expression, occasionally uttering a few words in an undertone.

Wimmer had brought out his pocket-handkerchief and was applying it to his nose.

"I would rather be a village schoolmaster and teach the peasant children their *A B C*," he growled, "than drill such great stupid louts. What is that I hear? Fleche, are you talking French again? And have I not told you a million of times, Lane, that you are not to answer the French rascal? He must learn to speak German if he wishes to open his mouth here. Am I to stand quiet while you two scoundrels abuse me in French? It is enough to make one jump out of one's skin. Is it not enough that this German dolt wears me to death, but they give me a French idiot, who does not understand a word of German!—Fleche! attention! Say after me: *Links und rechts, und rechts und links*" (Left and right, and

right and left). "*Lingsh und rächs, und rächs und lingsch*," stammered Fleche.

"Look here, Fleche," said Wimmer, again, touching his sword, "this is a *seiten-gewehr* (sword)—What is it called?"

"*Zeiten-gewer!*" said Fleche, with a strange contortion of his face.

"Now I have to be master of languages," growled Wimmer, "and I get no extra pay for it!—But that will do for to-day. A snowstorm is coming on; you must drill again to-morrow. Say *Schnee-gestöber* (snow-storm), Fleche!"

"*Sneege—Sneege—Stöpp!*—c'est impossible," said the tall recruit, in a tone of vexation.

"You are a Wendisch bagpipe!" said Wimmer, and dismissed them.

"How have I deserved this?" said Lane, the former Hiebendahl. "Can I bear such a fate much longer?"

When he returned to the barracks and the room which he occupied, he looked with sadness at the dirty grey walls, its floor, its coarse furniture, hard bed not over-clean, and then gazed with a sigh at the accoutrements hanging on the clothes-pegs—like so many badges of slavery.

"Can it be true? Is it not a bad dream?" he asked himself. "Miserable man that I am! Oh, my dear Agnes! My darling children! Are you really dead to me, and I to you?"

The new recruit had not hitherto been allowed to leave the barracks; moreover, the promised bounty of fifteen dollars had not been given him, on the pretence that he was not at present in want of it. As, besides this, the recruiting party had taken away from him, with the handsome clothes which he was wearing, all the money which he had about him, the once rich merchant did not possess a single penny. Of what great value a few pence would have been to him now, those only can judge who have been in a similar position. Librecht Hiebendahl was not ashamed of the silent tears with which he moistened the hard black bread which he ate in a corner of the large room. His comrades were either on guard, or in the gallery, cleaning their accoutrements.

The entrance of Wilhelm Baumann, whose invalid father was servant in the barracks, interrupted Hiebendahl's sad reflections. The boy filled the two little tin bowls on the long table with fresh salt, at the same time glancing at the gigantic guardsman in the corner, and at last asked him whether he had any commissariat bread to sell. There were then, as there are now, soldiers who, by extra services or other means of obtaining money, were able to procure for themselves better food than the usual rations, and they looked upon the hard, coarse, black bread with disgust, and sold it at a moderate price to the poor people in Berlin. Librecht Hiebendahl, strange and disgusting as the soldier's fare was to him, was unfortunately obliged to eat it, and to keep his commissariat bread.

But a thought suddenly struck him as he looked into the open pleasant face of his young questioner.

"My boy!" he said, imploringly, "I have no bread to sell, but if you will take it and do me a little favour, you shall have my best thanks as well. I want half a sheet of white paper and the loan of pen and ink for a quarter of an hour. I suppose you go to school, and therefore you will be able to fulfil my request?"

"I do certainly go to school," replied Wilhelm,

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"but I dare not give you pen, ink, and paper. Do you not know that they are strictly forbidden?—that no guardsman is allowed to write?—that I should be turned out of the barracks instantly, and my father would lose his situation as servant, if I were to do what you wish?"

"Is it possible?" said the recruit, with astonishment. "What cruelty!"

"If I might advise you," continued Wilhelm, "you would not let it be known that you desire to write, or that you can write. If your corporal or any one else were to know, it might do you harm."

"This, too!" sighed Hiebendahl, and sank into deep thought.

"If I can but get out of the barracks and into the town," he thought, "I shall be sure to find ways and means of writing to my dear wife and informing her of my dreadful fate. But I cannot remain long among the soldiers, come what may. They kidnapped me; they forced me to take the oaths; but I before that had sworn fidelity to my dear wife before God's holy altar, and that vow is of more value than a forced oath."

From this moment the merchant took the greatest pains to learn the drill, and to master the other duties of military service as quickly as possible. In hopes of the sooner obtaining his aim, he uncomplainingly bore all the privations of his new position, submitted to the wearisome and unwonted labour, and endeavoured to gain the favour of his superiors—as in old times the tenderly-reared Joseph learned to obey as a slave, and even when an innocent prisoner did more than was required of him. Libreht took pains in brightening his arms and the buttons of his regimentals; in pipe-claying the leather, and cleaning; in washing, drying, and mangling his linen. He even learned to knit his stockings and to mend them, and in spite of his troubles he could not help smiling as he thought, "If my dear wife and mother could but see me, what would they say? What grief they must be in about me!"

When the day came for the newly-drilled recruits to take the solemn oath upon the regimental colours, in presence of the officers, Lane determined to protest against his unjust detention, and to urge his immediate liberation. The soldiers who had to take the oath were formed in a circle round the regimental colours in the barrack-yard, and in the midst of them stood the colonel and other officers. The regimental advocate began reading the oath aloud; the recruits were ordered to repeat it after him. "I swear," commenced the advocate. Here the gigantic Libreht stepped forward and said, "I beg for a favourable hearing!"

"How! What!" exclaimed the colonel. "A hearing! Nothing of the kind! You must repeat the oath after the sacramentarian, and hold your tongue as to everything else!"

"I protest against it," said Libreht. "I have been taken from my family contrary to all the rights of nations. I am a rich citizen and merchant of the free city of Frankfort; I am a husband and a father; and therefore I—"

"Provost!" shouted the colonel, angrily. "Take this fellow away and imprison him! Shut him up securely with bread and water for three days—do you understand? Has the fellow no idea of subordination? Have not you already taken the oath? You deserve to run the gauntlet for your obstinacy.

If you do not choose to swear upon the colours, let it alone, but you will not get away if you set your thick skull to work ten times. Do you not know that a soldier has nothing to do but to obey?"

In the meantime the provost had approached the merchant.

"Follow me!" he said, roughly. "Be reasonable, comrade!" he said, in a lower tone, "speak civilly to the colonel, and take the oath. Now be quick!" he said aloud. "It will do you no good, my poor fellow," he added, lowering his voice again, "to resist. Forwards!"

Hiebendahl seemed quite stupefied and incapable of uttering a syllable. He mechanically followed the provost into a dark room in the barracks, which with its grated window served as a prison. Here the provost manacled Hiebendahl in such a way that the right hand lay on the left side, and the left hand on the right side of his body; his feet were crossed and bound in the same manner—a painful and even terrible situation for a free man.

"Can nothing obtain my release?" asked Hiebendahl of the provost. "I am a rich man. If my friends knew where I was and in what a position, they would give thousands of pounds for my release."

"My poor comrade," replied the provost, compassionately, "you must try and give up that thought; sooner would the devil give up a soul than our regiment part with so tall a man as you. You must know that our gracious king is very fond of tall people, and that it gives him more pleasure to possess them than money—grenadiers cost him thousands of pounds. Our recruiting party certainly do not employ the most honourable methods to obtain their tall men, but this does not much trouble our king or us. The recruiting parties have to settle that with their own consciences. And if we were to listen to the complaints of every recruit, the whole regiment and its tall soldiers would come to nothing, and that would never do! For there is not another regiment of giants in all Europe; and I assure you, comrade, that you will be glad at heart when you see the tall upright ranks of your regiment marching all exactly alike—one step, one movement, one way of handling their weapons. You look upon a soldier's life too gloomily. I hope, by-and-by, you will sing another song."

"But why do they call me Lane, instead of my own name, Libreht Hiebendahl?" asked the soldier.

"Hum!" replied the provost. "Hiebendahl's too long a name, and cannot be pronounced so quickly as Lane. Besides, the merchant Hiebendahl is as good as dead and buried, and the guardsman Lane has taken possession of his tall body. May I not tell the colonel you see and regret your insubordination? Perhaps he will shorten your time of punishment. It would really grieve me if you had to sit in that miserable position for seventy-two hours."

The guardsman made no reply to these words, so the provost took his silence for consent. Lane now had leisure to meditate upon his wretched condition.

"How ingenious men are in tormenting their brethren," he said, sighing. "How have I suffered already! and they threaten me with cudgels, rods, the gallows, or musket balls. Why have I to suffer so much? Because I happen to possess a large and healthy body. If I had a crooked or lame leg, a club-foot, a hump-back or high shoulders, a squinting or weak eye, or imperfect teeth, I should be free

and happy. If I had but one of these little troubles, how thankful I should be!"

At the end of twenty-four hours, which seemed terribly long to the prisoner, he was relieved from his painful position. His colonel read to him all the obligations imposed upon him as a soldier; and the punishments ordered for a breach of them; the unconditional obedience to his superiors was especially represented as a most sacred duty. Lane was then for the first time allowed to join his comrades in the guard which was kept in the royal castle, near the person of the monarch. Lane's costume consisted of a blue uniform with red facings, white cloth breeches tucked into high boots reaching to the knees, a long red waistcoat, and a grenadier cap, which had in front of it a tall shining brass shield ending in a peak.

It was a beautiful sight, those gigantic well-made and well-disciplined soldiers, in their long well-ordered ranks, marching past with firm and echoing steps and glittering arms, with the beating of drums and the sound of fifes. All the passers-by paused, and others came up to stare at and admire the world-renowned tall body-guard of the Prussian king. The men were afterwards told off and sent to the posts assigned them.

Lane with one of his comrades was placed near the back entrance of the castle, and had to watch the castle itself, the surrounding country, and the people of Berlin, for two hours. When he was relieved he was permitted to rest for four hours in the guard-room; after which he had to stand sentry again, so that he was on duty four times during the four-and-twenty hours. He received every day for his subsistence two pounds of black bread, and eighteen-pence pay. That was not much for so large and strong a man, who had been accustomed to earn eighteen dollars a day. Nevertheless he stinted himself to save sixpence in order (as soon as he was allowed to leave the barracks) to purchase a sheet of letter-paper, a pen, and some ink. When he asked for these articles in a shop, he was told to his great distress that it was strictly forbidden to sell writing materials to a life-guardsmen.

"Well, I must try another way," said Lane, and he left the shop, and a moment after asked a little street boy to get him what he required, while he would wait a little distance off. The first lad he asked laughed in his face, and said, "You are a life-guardsmen, and I should find myself in a nice mess were I to buy you pen, ink, and paper. You can go to the shop just as well as I can."

A second boy was more obliging, or appeared to be so. He took the money and went to the shop; but Lane waited in vain for his return, and was at last convinced that the boy had run away. The loss of sixpence troubled the once wealthy merchant more than the loss of six hundred dollars would have done formerly, but he would not be discouraged by these failures, and at last he succeeded in obtaining the necessary materials. He was therefore obliged to scrawl his letter in his barrack-room by moonlight, after taking care to ascertain that all his comrades were sound asleep. He did not dare to light a candle, for the sentries in the yard would have given an alarm had they perceived the faintest glimmering of light; moreover, there was a glass window to the door of every room, through which the barrack inspectors, making their rounds in the galleries, could observe all that was going on. Poor Lane then was

driven to great straits how to accomplish his object. At last he decided to lie down and pretend to be asleep, writing, meanwhile, as well as he could, in a recumbent position, and in imminent danger of upsetting his precious ink!

At last, after much precaution and delay, he contrived to indite the following almost illegible letter:—

"My dearly loved Wife,—This is indeed my handwriting, though you may have some difficulty in recognising it. I write in bed and almost in the dark, and in great risk of being discovered. I was kidnapped by Prussian emissaries, and conveyed to Berlin, where I was placed in the king's regiment of life-guardsmen. I am now in the barracks. We are forbidden to write or send letters, and no one dare sell us pen, ink, or paper. On that day when I last saw you I received at dusk a letter from our friend Darn, of Mayence, imploring me to come to him at the inn at Oppach, as he had an important matter to confide to me. I went, but the letter was a forgery. When I reached Oppach a man asked me for the sake of charity to assist him with a travelling carriage, which was in great danger. I went with him. He led me a little out of the road, and there a travelling carriage lay on its side. Two men begged us to try to lift it. As I stooped to assist, many strong arms were thrown round me. I was dragged to the ground, and before I could even struggle, a pitch-plaster was put over my face, which nearly suffocated me. My arms and legs were tied with ropes. Other men who had been concealed behind the carriage helped to thrust me inside. Three men came into the carriage with me, the door was shut, and we drove off. The plaster was removed, for I had become insensible; but I was told, the least cry for help and it would be replaced. We travelled rapidly, and found relays of fresh horses every few miles. We never stopped to rest. I was not allowed to leave the carriage, and they gave me nothing to eat or drink until after we reached the Prussian frontier, and there we waited a short time. At last we reached this place. I am now changed into the life-guardsmen Lane, in the fourth company, under Captain Von Seidwitz. My corporal's name is Wimmer; he is our drill-master. Our barracks are in Charlotte Strasse. I occupy room No. 13. I entreat you to make every effort to obtain my liberty. The hope of one day seeing you again, and my mother, and my children, alone gives me courage to endure this life. But I put my trust in God, the Preserver of all. Kiss my mother and Adolphus and little Diedrich and the baby for their loving father and your loving husband,

"LIBRECHT HIEBENDAHN (now called Lane)."

Now that the letter with great labour was written, his next difficulty was how to get it posted. He did not dare to do it himself, for a life-guardsmen's letter would be sure to be stopped. The address, too, was a difficulty. The authorities might have received orders to lay aside all letters bearing the name of Hiebendahl, to Frankfort-on-the-Maine. So he directed it to his most intimate acquaintance, Herr Römer, a merchant in Frankfort. A boy offered to post it for a small reward. The post-office officials looked at the letter, and then at the messenger.

"Who gave you this letter to post?"

"My cousin can tell you."

"What is your cousin?"

"A market servant."

The official said no more, but he made a cross upon the letter with red chalk, and threw it into a separate box.

The little messenger returned to Lane and told him his letter had been taken in.

Lane felt happy; he counted the days and hours till Agnes should receive it. It never occurred to him that it might never reach her hands!

THE DIVER IN SOUTH AMERICA.

THE vessel in which I was once sailing from England to San Francisco, having come in contact with an iceberg off Cape Horn, was compelled to put into the nearest port to refit. Finding the floating dock there too small to take her in, and no other facilities existing by which we could ascertain the nature and amount of the injuries sustained, we were obliged to trust entirely to the examination and report of the only diver the place contained. This man, however, our captain was told by the English merchants in the town, as well as by others capable of giving an opinion on the subject, was eminently trustworthy, his skill in effecting repairs in several previous cases of accident having established his reputation amongst European shipowners. His report was favourable; he could put matters right, and stop the leak effectually as soon as, or sooner than, the carpenters and riggers could restore the bowsprit and make good other repairs.

We were detained some weeks, and during that time I got very well acquainted with this diver. He was a tall, burly, but smart-looking fellow, and when he first came on board in company with the officials of the port and some English merchants, dressed in very good broadcloth, and with a handsome gold chain across his vest and a costly diamond ring on his finger, no one would have guessed he was the diver. He had been in the country from boyhood, and had contracted a good deal of the sedate and stately manner of the higher-class Spaniards, for we found that he moved in the best circles, and was universally respected. His mechanical skill was so well known that he had been often urged to go to England, but he invariably refused.

"No, sir," he said to me when I wondered at his refusal; "I would rather make less money in a place like this, where no one looks down on me. I might go to the United States, but never to England. Here I associate with the highest and best in the land; at home I should always be looked upon as a mere mechanic, and treated accordingly."

How far he was right in his opinion on this point I do not affirm, but certainly talent, or even worth, if not accompanied by wealth, may pass unnoticed in England more than in most countries.

One day I questioned him respecting the peculiar dangers attending the prosecution of his calling on that coast, and he narrated several interesting incidents which had befallen him. Some of the perils he described were of a novel and rather extraordinary character, and more than once had his life been placed in imminent danger.

Pointing to the bay (we were gossiping on deck as the water was too rough that day for his work), where a number of the whales so common on that coast—not of the kind pursued for their oil—were

lazily blowing their spouts in the air as they cruised about amongst the shipping, he told me that "those fellows often annoyed," and once or twice had endangered his life.

"Once I was caulking the side of a schooner I had been stopping a leak in. I was sitting comfortably enough on my stage, hard at work, when a shadow fell on me, and on looking round I saw a monstrous object, like the submerged hull of another vessel, rounding her stern close to me. Antonio—that's the man who pumps the air down—was in his boat, but could do nothing. Slowly the huge creature's head approached, and I was in hopes it would proceed on. But, apparently struck by the sight of my helmet, and a red flannel overall shirt I was wearing, it stopped and stared at me as if trying to make out what on earth—or rather under water—I was doing there. I was not at all pleased with this visit, for the play of its huge fins—or paddles, rather—caused a great swirling in the water, and I was terrified lest they should draw and catch the air tubing and break it, for presently it came closer still, and it was with difficulty I kept my balance, so strong were the currents made by their motion. The men on board were in a fright, and at first did not obey my signal to haul up quickly. At last they complied, and my visitor made off.

"Once, however, I did not escape so easily. I have seen them pass near me hundreds of times, but they very seldom come so close as that. Sometimes, however, they will almost touch the ship's side, though I never myself knew them to do what a Russian captain witnessed. I was a boy when Kotzebue visited this country, and he told me that in Concepcion Bay one rested against his brig for fully three minutes, perhaps mistaking her hull for another whale. You may see the occurrence mentioned in his book.*

"One day, however, I saw one almost do the same thing, for he came alongside and remained stationary, and so close that I was afraid he would compress the air-tubing between his body and the hull. He was within my reach, and I took up from the stage where it lay an auger I had been working with, and let drive into him with all the force in my power. It would have been wiser, however, if I had been more gentle, for the sudden start, and the whisk he gave with his flukes as they rushed past, upset me off the stage. Most fortunately the affair only occupied a few seconds, else it would have been all up with me. I had a rope round me, and was quickly hauled to the surface, but I was half dead when they got me on deck.

"Another day I was attacked in a very extraordinary manner. I said just now that I once had on a red shirt, which I put on over all. I take care never to wear one now. I was busy with an auger boring a hole, when I felt a tug at my arm, and before I could well realise what was the matter, I felt a dozen similar tugs in different parts of my body. I had been attacked by a shoal of mackerel—it seems that red is a colour that always attracts them—and before I could count ten I had as many of these fish clinging and biting furiously at me as could by any possibility find a spot to get hold of. I happened to

* Kotzebue's "First Voyage in the Pacific." These whales are always to be seen playing among the shipping in South American bays and seaports. They are called "bottle-nosed" whales by sailors, and never being meddled with, are very numerous. Hair seals are equally abundant in some places.

be standing on a kind of ladder, and, so powerfully did they drag at me, and so encumbered was I by the multitudes which hung from every part, that I had quite a job to mount it. Each fish here weighs a couple or three pounds, so you may fancy the pull when hundreds at once were at me.

"Another danger I have to look out for is this. This coast, all the way up to Panama and farther, is subject to rollers—*i.e.*, heavy swells, which suddenly and without apparent cause rise out at sea, and come, sometimes only one, at others two or three monstrous waves in succession, towering thirty or forty feet in height.*

"Once, when working at the end of Quiriquina Island, in the Bay of Concepcion, the port of which is called Talcauano, in such a position that we could not look seaward, the man pumping for me in the boat happened to have his face turned from the shipping, and neither he nor the men on board the brig I was under observed that signals were being made from the shore. At last, one of the brig's crew, who had been at dinner, came from the fore-castle and observed them, and called the captain, who was an old coaster, and instantly surmised what was coming. His brig had got aground, and I was examining and patching up a hole underneath; and I tell you it was a touch and go for all of us, for already the huge wave, against the rush of which all the craft had been preparing their tackle, was far up the bay. I felt Antonio's signal of urgent danger, and, hastening to the surface, jumped into the boat, the brig's crew hastily joining us; and going on shore, we mounted a point where we could look seaward just as the long line of roller broke on the outer end of the island and came roaring along its sides. Just then the crew discovered that one of their number was not with them—that Pedro Gomez was still aboard; and on our turning our eyes from the roller, which would very soon sweep past us to the brig, we saw no signs of him. It was concluded he had laid down for his siesta before the rest, for you must know the people of these countries would almost as soon do without their dinner as their mid-day sleep. Had the wave come ten minutes later all hands but my man and myself would have been fast as a church.

"The brig fortunately lay within easy stone's-throw of the cliffs, which there and for some distance were not easily climbed. Running as near as we could, I and one or two others hurled fragments of rock, the clatter of which on the deck and fore-castle woke him, and we were near enough to see the horror-stricken look on his face when he realised his position. It was now too late for him to attempt to reach the shore by swimming, as he could not land there, but must go some distance down; and to do this he must skirt a reefy rock, which extended for some distance out. Against this the stranded vessel in another couple of minutes or so would be hurled by the advancing wave, and his fate in that case was certain death if he remained in her. It was easy enough to reach the cliffs opposite the vessel, but before he could climb to a safe place the wave would be on him and sweep him away. I saw at a glance that there was now only one avenue of escape open to him, but that was a certain one, providing he had

the courage and, above all, the ability, to resort to it. Meanwhile the crew were—as is the way with these people at such times—cursing and praying alternately, vowing gifts to this and the other one of their saints if he would only be civil enough to stop that wave from washing their brig and all their traps in her away. The captain was particularly vociferous and blasphemous in his prayers and imprecations; and when, spite of all he could say to it and the promises he poured out, the image he had taken from his bosom to kiss and fondle and coax into doing what he wished proved itself obstinate, or powerless, he dashed it from him, with a horrible curse, towards the roller, which was now thundering past below us. In another second it swept over the doomed brig. When it had passed, only the fragments of her were to be seen. Antonio, with some difficulty, had in the meantime ascertained from his excited countrymen that Pedro was a good swimmer, and on hearing this we had both shouted to him to jump overboard and swim out clear of the reef of rocks. 'Swim well out, and then, when it reaches you, dive down under it, and it will pass over you,' we shouted. He understood us, more from our motions than our speech, for the noise of its approach overpowered us. He hesitated so long, however, that he was very nearly too late. When he at last screwed his courage to the sticking-point and jumped over the brig's taffrail, the roller was barely a hundred and fifty yards away, and he had at least forty to swim to get clear of the reef spoken of. By the time he had got well beyond the end of the rock, it was on him. Down he went, however, and at the right moment, and the mountainous heap, which was unbroken, there passed over him and rolled up the bay towards the town and shipping. In half a minute or so he came to the surface and swam ashore all right.

"I lost my boat, for she was stove in and knocked to pieces, and several craft were thrown ashore by that same wave."

The avocations of the diver were attended with perils of various kinds. Once, when replacing some worn sheets of copper on the bottom of a whaling brig which had anchored in the bay for a few days, he was visited by two monstrous sharks, who, however, kept at a respectful distance from his stage, awed perhaps by his strange figure and the noise of his blows on the metal. They had accompanied the brig for weeks, and followed her into harbour.

"But the only time," said he, one day, "that I was ever really frightened—really in great danger—was once up in the north, where I had gone to recover a case of valuable ore and silver in bars, which had been lost some years before while being hoisted into the vessel. It was two days before I found it. It lay on a broad, flat-topped rock, in about three fathoms of water, and the wood was so rotted that I had to return for more hide ropes to lash round it before I could trust it to the chain and hooks. When I went up for these, the agent of the company to whom the ore belonged advised me to defer the job, as a norther had been long brewing, and the place was very exposed to swells; but after taking a good look at the weather, knowing that these northerly gales often last a week, and being anxious to finish the job—knowing, too, that it would not take long to do so—I resolved on descending. So over the boat's stern and down my ladder I went, and in a few minutes had the case securely lashed, after which I rolled and pushed it to the edge of the rock under

* The late Admiral Fitzroy ridiculed the notion that even ordinary sea waves never attain a greater height than from nine to twelve feet. He mentions, however, sixty feet as the altitude of some observed by him (*vide* "Voyage of Beagle") in the Bay of Biscay.

the chain and hooks hanging from the boat's bows, slipped the hooks into the hide loops I had made, and then hastened to get off the rock (which was only three feet or so in height) to go to my ladder; and it was high time to do so, for I felt that a heavy swell was now setting in, so that I could hardly keep my footing on the bottom. Well, sir, perhaps you can imagine my feelings when I tell you that I had no sooner put my legs over the side of the rock—my feet had barely touched the ground—when I felt both ankles seized and held with irresistible power. I had been grasped by the tentacles, or arms, of a cuttle-fish, which had its lurking-place there.

"Now you must know that I have an instinctive loathing at these creatures. I had seen them often enough, and generally they darted off the moment they caught sight of my figure. But this one had not been aware of my presence until my legs suddenly presented themselves before his eyes.

"After the first few fruitless plunges I made to free myself, I turned almost faint with fear and a kind of horror and disgust, but this did not last long, for I soon got '*mad*,' as the Yankees say, at the idea of being noosed, lassoed, and held prisoner there by such a puny creature as that. Although I had heard wonderful stories from the '*choros*'* gatherers as to its extraordinary strength and ferocity when meddled with, I could not but think I should soon free myself, and again and again I tugged and strained, and pulled and pushed, but all in vain. Strong man as I am, I was powerless. I could not drag the creature from its holdfast on the rock, and I knew well that if I ventured my hands near, they too would be seized in that frightful grip, and I should be bound, hand and foot, like a poor boy in the south I had heard of, who, when gathering shellfish, was thus seized and held in a stooping position till the tide overwhelmed and drowned him.

"Meantime most urgent signals were being made to me from above to hurry; and when I at last paused, breathless, after a long, frantic effort, I gave way to utter despair. But my faculties were still awake, and I observed that the creature would not loosen its hold by straight pushing or pulling, and therefore determined to try and *screw* it off the rock. You see it was human intellect against superhuman strength.

"I held on to the case, and with its aid tried, but soon found I could not manage it that way. The projecting edge of the rock hindered me. I therefore hit on another way. I pulled down some more of the chain out of the boat (I was sitting on the rock, you must remember), and then taking the case up on my knees, I let it down in front of me, and then tilted it over till it was at a proper distance, and then I left the rock and sat on the case. I was now opposite the beast, and could see that it held on by three of its tentacles, the other five being round my legs. These tentacles were not more than two feet long, and the creature's body was not bigger than my fist. Its eyes glared when it saw me, and it tried hard to bite, but the boots and thick stockings beat it.

"Well, to make my story short, I turned and twisted, but I doubt if I should have got him to let go in time by that means alone. But I could now see it, and tried to crush and bruise the creature with my boots as well, but its tenacity was amazing. It was

not till I picked up a long piece of slate stone off the bottom, and began in desperation to saw at its tentacles, that it at last let go. But it did so only to fasten all its suckers on me, and try more furiously than ever to bite me with its parrot-shaped bill. I succeeded, however, in keeping my hands and arms free, and I instantly made the signal to '*hoist away*.' I kept tight hold of the chain, and was hoisted with the case, and very glad, though much astonished, they all were to see me ascend that way. I hastily explained what had happened, and they pulled me in, and while all haste was made by the rest to get ashore (for the first blast of the norther struck the boat as I got to the surface), Jacques (that's my man) cut the cuttle-fish away piecemeal, for pulling it off was out of the question, so tenaciously did it cling to the very last."

Many a long talk did I have with this diver while he was reposing on deck after hours passed under water, my principal object being to find out whether I could depend on his word, and I was at last convinced that he was truthful, conscientious, and that we might believe him when he said that there would be no danger in our continuing the voyage. The very enthusiasm with which he tried to describe to me the plan he had hit on to repair the damage (which at first he owned he had thought irreparable) convinced me of his sincerity, at any rate. He spoke truly, for, battered as we were, we doubled Cape Horn in frightful weather, and got to Liverpool safely; and I heard afterwards that when the vessel was docked, every shipwright who saw it admired the ingenuity displayed by his workmanship.

PORT ROYAL.

BY THE REV. FREDERICK ARNOLD.

I.

THE history of Port Royal is the history of a hundred years; it runs almost exactly parallel with the seventeenth century. It commences with the personal story of a young girl, and with the annals of an obscure locality. Gradually the story largely increases in breadth, and deepens in its interest, so that, as in the old saying, "The brook becomes a river, and the river becomes a sea." The story of Port Royal connects itself with a remarkable intellectual movement, which forms a chapter of French history, a section of European literature; it becomes identified with far-reaching social and political consequences. It is the history of the greatest attempt within the limits of the Church of Rome to work out an inner reformation, analogous to the Reformation of the sixteenth century. It is remarkable that the revolutions of time in their cycle have brought round again that question, which is the pivot of the Port Royal narrative, the question of the infallibility of the Pope. The narrative of the resistance of Port Royal to papal claims affords points of contact to the protests of our day, made by such men as Père Hyacinthe, in France, and Döllinger, in Munich, and Newman, in England. In the seventeenth century the story is seen on a much wider scale, and we are able to trace all its ramifications and its consequences. It is the history of the conflict between Jansenism, which may be considered as rudimentary and undeveloped Protestantism, and Jesuitism, which combined the worst

* "*Choros*"—a kind of shellfish which abounds in the south of Chili.

moral faults of fallen human nature with the doctrinal errors of the Church of Rome. The conflict is between spiritual religion, however shackled by the encrustation of the errors of the time, with its genuine aspirations after holiness and God, and merely human systems that overwhelm any true faith beneath the load of superstition and sin. In this conflict the Church of Rome cast out those nobler spirits of whom it was not worthy. The whole power of the Order of the Jesuits, of the throne of France, of the Pope, was in the issue combined, to crush a few poor helpless women who refused to act against what their consciences told them to be the truth. Their convent was razed to the ground, and their bodies were cast to the dogs and the birds of the air, but their name remaineth for evermore. Noble champions, Pascal and Arnauld chief among them, took up the cause. The story of Port Royal is one that unceasingly commends itself to all lovers of righteousness, to all lovers of intellectual and moral greatness.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century a crusader going forth to the Holy Land gave his wife a sum of money to be laid out for the benefit of the church. He belonged to the famous house of Montmorenci, which had established many religious institutions in the diocese of Paris, and, according to pious precedent, this endowment was now devoted to the foundation of a monastery. A fief was purchased six leagues to the westward of Paris, situated, as it was called, "en Porrois," in a valley near Chevreuse, not far from the waste, sandy district on which arose in a later age the gardens and palaces of Versailles and Marli. This spot has now obtained an immortal fame through all Christian and civilised countries as Port Royal. On the exact meaning of the name there have been divided opinions. One legend was that King Philip Augustus paid a visit to a chapel of St. Lawrence, and that the name was given in honour of this visit. It would seem, however, that *porra* or *borra* in mediæval Latin signified a hole covered with brambles and partly filled with stagnant water. Such an unfavourable term would accurately denote a spot long described as a frightful and savage desert; where the sides of the valley rose abrupt, with an impenetrable entanglement of brushwood, and the congregated waters of the marshes sent forth poisonous exhalations. In this valley, so unlike any "Happy Valley" of fact or fiction, arose the church and monasteries of Port Royal. The architect was the same who built the noble cathedral of Amiens. The architecture was the Early Pointed, of which our most perfect example is the beautiful cathedral of Salisbury. The rule of the abbey was Cistercian, that is to say, it followed the strict rule of the illustrious St. Bernard, and was placed under the jurisdiction of the Abbot of Cîteaux, the head of the great Cistercian Order in France. At the time when what may be called the modern history, as distinguished from the mediæval history, of Port Royal opens, there had been a very considerable departure from the strictness of Cistercian rule. There was much corruption in ecclesiastical appointments at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and not the least proof of it was that the monastery of Port Royal was then nominally ruled by a child-abbess hardly eight years old. The name of this young abbess was Jacqueline Arnauld, famous in history as the Mère Angélique.

The family of Arnauld, which contributed during the century some eighteen members to Port Royal, and whose name is inseparably bound up with its history and fame, was one which during many generations had been distinguished in the south of France. One of their ancestors, as the Jesuits invidiously cast up against Port Royal, had, at least at one time, been a Huguenot. He left eight sons, all of whom were distinguished in the army, or in civil appointments of the state, and one of them was buried in the Huguenot cemetery, near the church of St. Sulpice. The second of these sons was Antoine Arnauld, an eloquent barrister, whose eloquence so won the regard of the *avocat-général*, M. Marion, that he gave him his daughter in marriage when she was only a girl, and on all occasions eagerly pushed his fortunes. They had no less than twenty children, of whom ten came to mature years. M. Antoine Arnauld was so eloquent that on one occasion when he was describing the exploits of a great soldier, the Duc de Montpensier, who was present, unconsciously drew his sword half way from its scabbard. But the most memorable lawsuit in which he was engaged was that in which he represented the University of Paris against the Jesuits. For more than a hundred years the Jesuits regarded him and his family with peculiar hatred. His eldest son was called Robert Arnauld d'Andilly, Andilly being the name of the estate which he inherited from his mother. One of Robert's sons was the Marquis de Pomponne, a minister of Louis the Fourteenth; another died a hermit at Port Royal. Of Antoine Arnauld's children, one married Isaac le Maître, whose sons are famous in the annals of Port Royal. A son, bearing his own name, Antoine, became a doctor of the Sorbonne, and has a most conspicuous part in the annals and literature of Port Royal. The two younger daughters were Jacqueline and Jeanne, in succession abbesses of Port Royal. Of all these names we shall hear much more in our narrative.

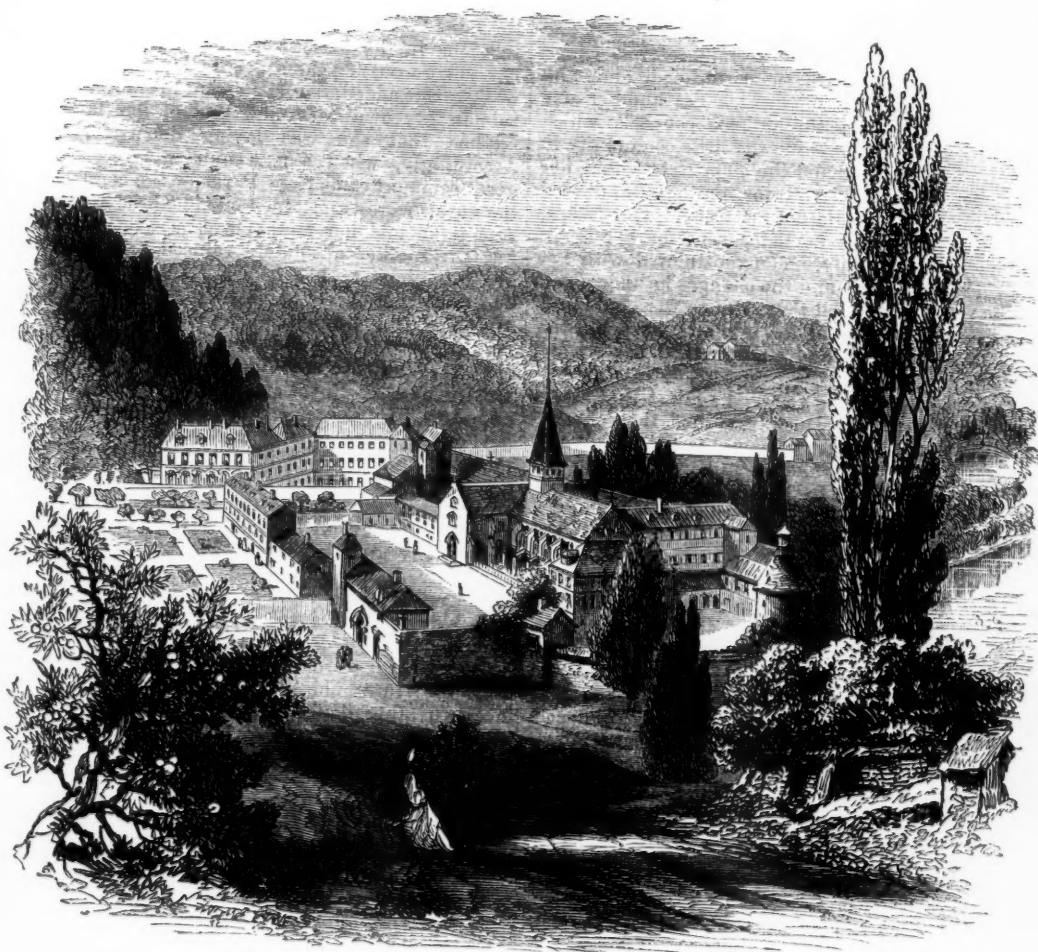
Jacqueline Arnauld spent a great deal of time with her grandfather, the *avocat-général*. Antoine Arnauld's family was coming on so fast that he despaired of giving portions to all his daughters, and determined that some of them must embrace the religious life. The nunneries were constantly recruited from selfish domestic reasons. The great influence of M. Marion might help him materially with his plans. The abbot of Cîteaux was anxious and willing to promote the views of so distinguished a man as the king's *avocat-général*. He said he would be able to make one sister abbess of Port Royal, and the other sister abbess of St. Cyr. The easy-tempered king, Henry the Fourth, accordingly issued letters-patent conferring the benefices on these mere children. It was settled for Jacqueline that she should be coadjutrix and successor to the present abbess of Port Royal. When Jacqueline took the veil, according to custom, she took a religious name, that of Angélique. When she was to be made abbess, the necessary bull was refused at Rome; but the clever lawyer of her family, by representing her as seventeen years old when she was eleven, and using other arts and subterfuges, procured the necessary authorisations. The whole transaction is utterly discreditable. Once the king, when hunting, came to the monastery, and the child abbess was artfully mounted on lofty pattens that she might appear older than her age. For a religious life Angélique did not feel the slightest vocation. She

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even thought of running away altogether from it, and taking refuge with her Huguenot aunts at Rochelle. The life at Port Royal was simply unendurable to her. There was one thought, however, which effectually restrained her—the grief and disappointment which she would cause her parents. Still, with all drawbacks, the life at Port Royal was not so unpleasant to an unconverted person. It was true the revenues were not large, and the servants

and frivolous enjoyments. She was fond of reading, and her favourite work was "Plutarch's Lives," a work that has exercised a powerful influence on so many youthful minds. A time was coming to Angélique when her whole spiritual being should be stirred to its utmost depths, and a great change should pass over her mind and soul. It so happened that one season of Lent she had been reading a devotional work which had not been without influence on



PORT ROYAL.

committed gross peculations; but the sisters, defying the regulations, had their private property. They dressed as near the Paris fashions as they could, wore gloves and masks to preserve their complexions, got up masquerades, hurried through the services, and dispensed with sermons, and wound up the day with cards. Such frivolity and irreligion marked these professedly religious persons in their secluded home. Under the rule of a mere child it might seem that the easy days of Port Royal would be indefinitely prolonged.

This, however, was not to be. Angélique had too powerful a mind to be satisfied with mere idleness

her mind. One day shortly afterwards, as the evening shadows were drawing in, a Capuchin friar came to her gates and asked leave to preach in the convent church. This Capuchin was named Basil. He was a man who had determined to leave France and abjure the Roman Catholic religion. The Capuchin knew nothing of his audience, and his audience nothing of him. But he preached to them in an eminently earnest and heart-piercing way. He expatiated on the peculiar advantages of the religious life. He dwelt on the dangers of the world, the misery of sin, and the power and blessings of true religion. The young abbess was touched to the

heart. She came to a swift resolution with all the impetuosity of her nature, that she would devote herself wholly to God, and seek, to the utmost of her power, to fulfil the peculiar duties of her position. It was afterwards said, even by the Port Royal writers, that the man had an indifferent character; but Madame Schimmelpenninck is probably correct in saying that "many circumstances seem to favour the idea that the only error imputed to this Capuchin was his becoming a Protestant, and conscientiously abjuring the errors of the Church of Rome, and hence that the conversion of the Mère Angélique was the fruit of the faithful exposition of the gospel of Christ." Afterwards, another Capuchin came to the convent, to whom she opened her mind respecting certain reforms which she meditated making in the sisterhood, and who gave her ample encouragement. Yet another one came, who advocated the quieter counsels which were much more agreeable to the little community in general. The prioress and the elder sisters told her that reform was very well for those who needed reform, but that they did not need any. Her father, M. Arnauld, the great barrister, sent for her to his country seat of Andilly, and expostulated with her on her new asceticism, and the changes he understood she was meditating. All these things were too much for poor Angélique. She fell into an illness, but the illness only deepened and strengthened her resolutions.

Her whole nature now revolted against that atmosphere of worldliness which pervaded the convent. Whatever new and solemn thoughts of destiny and duty may have been awakened in her mind, she felt she ought to give effect to them in the management of the foundation over which she presided. Amid the errors that bound her she was groping towards better things. She would not feel at liberty to discuss the wisdom or the unwisdom of the original rules of the Cistercian Order, but they came upon an aroused conscience with all the weight of absolute authority. Being an abbess of the Cistercian Order, it seemed to her that her first duty was at any cost to revive the Cistercian rule in its integrity. She appears to have proceeded on her path of reform with great prudence. Half a century later she said of herself, that "immediately after the sermon which had so touched her conscience, she became very fearful of being left a prey to delusions and visions, and prayed to God that he would deliver her from these perils," to which she added "that he had granted her prayer." Her father caused a preacher to be sent to Port Royal, who, he thought, would correct her enthusiasm. But the preacher took as his text, "Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake," which still more confirmed her in her purpose. It so happened that the prioress and one of the sisters from whom she had expected great opposition, seeing how her heart was consumed with intense zeal on the subject, voluntarily came to her and offered in every respect to conform to her wishes. One of the vows was to have all things in common; accordingly each sister now came to lay her little possessions at the feet of the abbess. One old nun was for months unwilling to give up a little garden in which she took great pride. At last, however, she wrote a kind letter which must have cost her a severe pang, enclosing the key. Monsieur Antoine Arnauld could not in the least understand his daughter's proceedings. His great fear was that she should resign a benefice which had been so fraudulently obtained. He

thought it best to make a clean breast of all former irregularities, and ask for new bulls from Rome. In his petition he recounted all the benefactions of his family to Port Royal, and even made a merit of his daughter's reform which he had so intensely deprecated. The Holy See granted Angélique a confirmation in her abbacy on the condition that she should once more formally take the veil. It is remarkable that even then Angélique was not unwilling to be released from her dignity, and only complied in accordance with the earnest request of her father.

Seclusion was a rule of the Cistercian Order which Angélique was determined to restore. She informed the nuns that they could not receive their friends and relations in the parlour without express permission, nor yet go outside the conventual precincts in their walks. She added, that she meant to enforce the same rule in her own case, and that of her father and mother, that she was laying down for others. Accordingly, when a new nun was received, and great company came from Paris for the ceremony, all the guests were entertained outside the convent walls. Angélique told her mother what she intended to do, but her mother absolutely refused to communicate her intentions to her father. A messenger comes one day from Angélique's old home to the convent, saying that a large family party, her father and mother, her married and unmarried sisters, and her eldest brother, Robert Arnauld d'Andilly, were all coming to Port Royal on a visit. Angélique determined to be true to her purpose. She took under her own charge all the keys of the convent, and awaited on her knees in church the arrival of the travellers. When the summons came to the portal she opened the wicket, and entreated her father to step into the parlour hard by, and to hear what she had to say about matters. M. Arnauld became exceedingly angry, and, as admission was again and again refused him, more and more angry. His wife and eldest son joined in his expostulations and reproaches. He declared that he should die with grief for having brought up so thankless a child, and that the sin would lie at her door. He asked that his two other daughters who were at the convent should be given up to him, intending to force an entrance when they came out. Angélique had foreseen this, and had sent round a nun with the girls from the side door as soon as they were asked for. One of them, the young girl Agnes, precociously and calmly defended her sister's conduct by a quotation from the Council of Trent. At last M. Arnauld, before departing, entered the parlour for a last interview with the daughter who appeared thus to cast him off. His evident grief touched the tender-hearted Angélique to her soul. He reminded her of all he had done for her, and implored that she would not ruin her health with these austerities. He was answered by the poor girl falling down insensible at his feet. The conflict had been too much for her, and, as usual, love had proved more powerful than wrath. The poor abbess was carried to bed, begging her parents not to leave till they had seen her again. That day some kind of a compromise was arrived at. M. Arnauld and his wife and daughters were permitted to enter the precincts, not to go beyond. It was long before Madame Arnauld would come to the convent to see her child. She had vowed never to enter Port Royal again, but one day she happily heard a sermon on unlawful vows, and then hurried there at once to embrace her much-loved girl.

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It took altogether nearly eight years before the discipline of Port Royal was restored altogether to the model of Clairvaux. The changes were made little by little. The vow of poverty was steadily adhered to. The revenues of Port Royal were scanty, and Angélique now steadily refused to receive any additions to it from her father. Serge was substituted for linen, and delf for porcelain. Nevertheless, a generous hospitality was maintained for the poor, the wayfarer, and the wandering friar. The rule of silence was maintained. The fasts were strictly observed; at two in the morning matins were said or sung. All took their turn in the labours of the kitchen and the infirmary. After some years she announced that the use of meat was to be given up. For some time before, she had confined herself to a spare vegetable diet, and now she only asked of others that they should follow her own example, and she was so loved that this was at once complied with by her sisters.

There is much to puzzle us, much to lament, in reading this and similar narratives of self-deprivation and austerities. It is sad to think of the valuable lives weakened, wasted, and destroyed through an irrational system carried out in violation of all the laws of health. The details of the Cistercian rule may be demonstrated to be both irrational and unscriptural. There are indeed some considerations that may partially modify our condemnation of the system. The existence of such a society was no doubt a standing evidence to a worldly and luxurious age of the reality of a faith in things beyond this life. There were probably souls for whom the strict monastic discipline might have a salutary effect, although it can hardly be doubted that even in these extreme instances "a more excellent way" might have been found. In reading the lives of these holy women, and also of the remarkable community with which their memory is associated, we often see sad results of their system, and must always bear in mind its imperfections and limitations.*

But we may feel quite sure that a more useful as well as a brighter life might be found for those who abdicated the world for the hermitage and the monastery. There were many gifted men and women who immured themselves in the close valley of Port Royal de Champs who might have done a nobler work if they had retained their places in the world, and sought to leaven the society with which they were surrounded. If men full of faith and purpose had mingled in the parliament, the bar,

the court, the literary saloon, testifying by the loftiness of their lives and aims that though in the world they were not of the world, it is conceivable that French society might not have been abandoned to its vices, and that the revolutionary era might have been postponed or averted. Those who might have sanctified family life, and have purified the social atmosphere in which they lived, spent on thin air those precious energies that might have inaugurated an era of reformation. The piety of the cloisters is a sickly exotic. Doubtless it has been fruitful in saintly lives, and its highest attainable point has been shadowed forth in such works as the "Meditations of Thomas à Kempis." But a virtue that is at every point shielded from temptations, which is surrounded by artificial barriers, garrisoned by a company of watchful associates and guardians, helped and fostered by daily and hourly regulation of details, may not be the healthy robust piety best adapted for the discharge of duty and for conquest over the incitements of evil. What is wanted in our world is the virtue that shall well discharge the duties and resist the temptations of life, not that which by flight alone betrays an incompetence to meet them. The cloister is a confession of weakness, not an exhibition of strength—that strength that has been tried and tested and comes forth conqueror. It may be a question also whether in any real case there has been a conquest over the world and sin. There is temptation as dangerous and subtle in solitude as in society. The divine grace that supports a recluse in fasting and solitude would preserve him unharmed amid the temptations and distractions of secular duties.

There is but one perfect life on record that may be safely held up to the imitation of man. In the human-divine life of the Lord Jesus Christ we find the perfect example of all that we should advance to. The Lord Christ did not avoid the homes and charities of human life. He sympathised in all human suffering, and gave his gracious sanction to all innocent human joy. He sat and ate in rich men's houses, and partook of their feasts. He adorned and made beautiful by his presence the marriage at Cana. He sat down at the weary noon by the well of Samaria to teach and convert the woman that left her water-pot; and let the woman that was a sinner bedew his feet with her tears and wipe them with her hair. He found a human home, amid all the charities of domestic life, in the household of Bethany. He mingled freely in the public life of that time, where men and women congregated in country or in town. He has thus shown us that human life in its ordinary course is not to be forsaken or unhonoured, but that it is the appointed sphere for the exercise and development of man's complex nature, of his powers and his beneficence, for his growth in wisdom and knowledge, for the discharge of duty and resistance against temptation. As the Christian poet says in those well-known lines—

"We need not bid for cloistered cell
Our neighbour or our work farewell,
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high
For mortal man below the sky.

The daily round, the trivial task,
Will furnish all we ought to ask,
Room to deny ourselves—a road
To lead us daily nearer God."

* Many of our readers are probably acquainted with Mrs. Schimmelpenninck's "Memoirs of Port Royal," not so much an original as a careful though rather limited selection from the original authorities. Since her time there has been an immense amount of literature on the subject of Port Royal. The chief of these is of course St. Beuve's great work in five volumes, to which he devoted eight years of his life. He formed a collection of works, amounting to several thousand volumes, relating to Port Royal, which, we believe, has been dispersed since his death. It is to be regretted that St. Beuve approached the subject almost entirely from a literary and historical point of view, and was indeed quite unfitted by all his opinions for its religious considerations. M. Victor Cousin's books on Blaise and Jacqueline Pascal should be mentioned. Two admirable reviews of Mrs. Schimmelpenninck's work, but separated by an interval of some thirty years, appeared in the "Edinburgh" and the "North British" Reviews, written respectively by Sir James Stephen and Sir David Brewster, both of them based not so much on Mrs. Schimmelpenninck's celebrated work as on the original authorities. The literary side of the Port Royalists is discussed by Mr. Hallam ("Literature of Europe," vol. iv), and the ecclesiastical side by Ranke ("History of the Popes"). I have to acknowledge obligations to my lamented friend Dr. Tregelles' admirable little book, "The Jansenists." But incomparably the best English work on the subject is Mr. Charles Beard's elaborate work, "Port Royal, a Contribution to the History of Religion and Literature in France" (Longmans, 1861). I have to thank Mr. Beard, not only for his most able and learned work, but for some rare books which he kindly placed at my disposal for the purposes of these papers.

Eminently attractive as are many of the beautiful lives of the Port Royalists, it is to be remembered that for the best part a radical misconception of human life underlies their special theory; and akin to this, that there is a very large admixture of error in their doctrinal system. But as we become familiar with the story of their lives, of their love of truth and sufferings for the truth's sake, their patient continuance in well-doing, their thorough love of God's Word and of the Saviour revealed in the Word, we feel sure that here too we meet with those who have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

CONVERSATION.

II.

SOME of those who in recent times have been most celebrated as conversationists, have had in reality no right to the title. Their exercise of the "faculty divine" of speech contributed in a high degree to the intellectuality and enjoyment of social life in their generation; but it was talk, not conversation. Very little interchange of thought took place between them and the company by which they were surrounded. Their discourse had too much the character of a lecture. In some cases it was a clever monologue, in which the speaker supplied the answers, comments, and objections of imaginary interlocutors, leaving the actual audience nothing to do but to acquiesce, by various conventionalisms of expression, in these impersonations. Others, on the contrary, merely soliloquised, and seemed almost unconscious of the presence of listeners; while the latter were made to feel as if they were intruding upon the privacy of the speaker. The performances of these solitary talkers, especially of the more eminent of them, were doubtless generally instructive and entertaining, and supplied to many of their hearers the materials for future conversation, but they did not very considerably promote or improve social intercourse. Indeed, they were in some degree adverse to its development. In their company every one depended upon them, or succumbed to them. And for the most part they were not patient of interpellation, inquiry, or a rival display of declamation. S. T. Coleridge, Lord Brougham, Dr. Whewell, Lord Macaulay, and Sir James Stephens, were talkers of this class. Whoever has attended an assembly, great or small, in which one of them was present, remembers it as an occasion of intellectual gratification, but his remembrance is also that of one who has formed part of an audience or congregation; he will not be able to recollect what was said by any but the great talker, not because it was less weighty or brilliant than his talk, but because it really amounted to nothing. There have been, however, within our memory, real conversationists—not monopolisers, but leaders of conversation—whose talk encouraged and created talk, who possessed the faculty of drawing out from others what they knew or thought, and a great part of whose own contributions to a discussion were often in reality, nearly always in appearance, suggested by something uttered perhaps by one of the least forward or voluble of the company.

Of this order, and occupying the first place, was William Wilberforce. The continuity of his

brilliant discourse, when the centre of a group in the most promiscuous society, was never impaired by the remarks, interrogations, and objections which his tone and style of speech invited, to which he listened with patience and urbanity, and which he invariably utilised with admirable skill in his rejoinders. It was felt to be not a presumption, but a privilege, to talk in his presence. Response, not silence, was the tribute which his sovereign excellence exacted, and made it easy to pay. He directed, while he seemed to follow, the current of conversation, and generally succeeded in turning it into a useful channel, and giving it a serious and religious character. He is perfectly described in the portrait which Cowper professes to have drawn from real life:—

"Grave without dulness, learned without pride,
Exact yet not precise, though meek, keen-eyed;
Who, when occasion justified its use,
Had wit as bright, as ready to produce;
Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
Or from philosophy's enlightened page,
His rich materials, and regale your ear
With strains it was a privilege to hear;
Yet above all, his luxury supreme,
And his chief glory was the gospel theme:
There he was copious as old Greece or Rome,
His happy eloquence seemed there at home;
Ambitious not to shine or to excel,
But to treat justly what he loved so well."

In the constellation of which Wilberforce was the brightest star, there were others of the first magnitude. His intimate friend, Henry Thornton, though somewhat sententious, and deficient in vivacity, was usually successful in ensuring among his guests, or wherever he was himself a guest, a general and interesting conversation, taking the chief part, but not the whole. Prebendary Gisborne, a scholar, divine, and natural philosopher of the highest eminence, was one of the most modest of men, even reserved; and when in company with any of his distinguished contemporaries and associates, always seemed desirous, although he was seldom permitted, to occupy a secondary position. But when he felt, at his own house, or that of a relative or friend, that he was responsible for the social character of the entertainment, he exerted himself, as in the performance of a duty, with his peculiar quiet animation and well-moderated geniality, to keep up the flow and circulation of conversation, talking with every one in turn, setting the example of good listening, and most adroitly overcoming the chief difficulties and hindrances offered by the various kinds of misconduct which have been noticed.

One of the most successful conversationists of this school, and of the last generation, whom we remember, was Mr. Cunningham, vicar of Harrow-on-the-Hill. He possessed in perfection the art of eliciting talk from others who had anything to say worth hearing, and of enlisting the co-operation of all the intelligent people in a room for the promotion and maintenance of interesting and intellectual discussions. Even in a promiscuous assemblage he generally succeeded in fusing the groups engaged in conventional small talk into a circle of orderly and attentive listeners. Getting hold of a knot of three or four, and talking until a promising subject turned up, he would enter upon it with an interest and spirit which at once communicated itself to the rest. The fascination of

his exquisite manner and tones could not fail soon to attract all within hearing, until the enlargement of his audience excited the attention of the whole company, and a general conversation on the subject under his management ensued. Sometimes he would employ direct means to produce this result. While talking with the few who at first gathered round him, he would take note of what was going on elsewhere, and when his quick observant eye discovered a suitable person *not* actually engaged in talk, would address him by name, inviting him to give an opinion, or to listen to a statement, or announce to him the topic just introduced. Necessarily elevating his voice above the ordinary pitch in order to make himself heard at some distance, and through the din of tongues, he would thus, without unduly obtruding it, proclaim the fact that a conversation of a superior character had commenced, and usually with the effect of securing general attention and redeeming the evening from the dulness and frivolity of gossip and the malignity of scandal.

Sydney Smith, himself a great talker as well as a great wit, was also the cause, if not of wit, yet certainly of talk, in others. His active imagination supplied materials of thought to those of slower apprehension and less felicitous speech; and his copiousness of language never amounted to an exuberance that swamped all utterance on the part of the rest of the company, but was so moderated and directed as to encourage remark and reply. His theory and rules of the art of conversation were perfectly exemplified in his practice. Lords Melbourne and Palmerston were good talkers, but they were also consummate conversationists. Persons of high position of course always command attention in company; and if they can speak fluently and well, the possession of this talent, in conjunction with the deference paid to their rank, too frequently gives their discourse the character of a lecture or harangue. But the good sense and perfect courtesy for which these two noblemen were eminently distinguished, preserved them from this error; and the discernment of character which was also a remarkable quality in both, was exercised by them as much in the social circle as in public life. To use a formula more expressive than correct, they always said the right thing to the right person, and would always select the right person for the right subject. They uniformly exerted themselves for the entertainment of the company, and induced the same effort on the part of others. Lord Palmerston was as successful in the leadership of large evening parties as he was in the leadership of the House of Commons.

There are those now living who are worthy of being brought into comparison with the type-forms of great talkers and good conversationists which have been described. But it may be questioned whether they have the same hold upon society, or occupy in general estimation the same position, as their predecessors. Certain habits and conditions of modern social life are unfavourable to the exhibition and development of conversational powers. There is an element of truth and fact in the complaint frequently heard, that ours is a "fast age." The epithet, in its liberal signification, is justified by the impatience and restlessness which certainly characterise most gatherings for business, amusement, and even improvement and instruction. This spirit shows itself in the popularity of short exhibitions and entertainments of various kinds, in the demand for short sermons and

short services, and in the impossibility of securing the attention of an audience, or indeed of keeping it together, beyond an hour or an hour and a half, in meetings called for the most important purposes. It is so diffused throughout our social atmosphere that, in almost any company, after a subject has been discussed for a few minutes, those who take the lead in the conversation cannot resist the impression that everybody has had enough of it, and that it is time to pass on to something else. Again, the increasingly prevalent custom of assembling very large parties discourages conversation. In a room so crowded that not half of those present can sit down, and in which it is impossible to move freely, or to communicate with any but those with whom one is in close contact, no circle can be formed, as when there is a considerable space unoccupied, so as to become the nucleus around which the whole company may gradually cluster for a general talk. The great number of small groups, in each of which loud and unlimited small talk is going on, increases the difficulty. Besides, the larger the party the more numerous are likely to be those characters of various classes whose peculiarities prevent the organisation or maintenance of general and continuous conversation. The object, too, of these great gatherings is not the promotion of social intercourse, or the entertainment of a large number of persons by their intellectual or even friendly communication with each other. It is well understood that they are simply complimentary; and as many people as possible are invited at once to save time, trouble, and expense. Under such conditions there can be no geniality, earnestness, and community of interest and feeling which are the elements of free and lively and equally-shared conversation.

Nothing has contributed to deprive evening parties of an intellectual and conversational character, and to reduce them all to the same level of dulness and barrenness, more than the invariable introduction of music. It is known that almost every lady "has brought her music," and expects to be asked to play or sing; and it is proper to give any gentleman who is reputed to have "a voice," or to cultivate the science of harmony, an opportunity to display his accomplishment. Of course there ought to be no talking at all, and there can be no general conversation while these performances are going on. Instead of an agreeable interlude, they become too often the staple of the evening's entertainment. The expectation of them is quite sufficient to prevent the introduction of subjects of a nature to engage the interest of a considerable number of those present. Or if by chance a group has entered into the discussion of a question, or is listening to a good story, the first notes of the piano are a signal for the abrupt abandonment of both talk and narrative; and after the song or sonata they cannot be very effectually resumed, especially as, when once begun, music is thenceforth the order of the evening. No disparagement is intended in this complaint to music as an art, or as an accomplishment of either sex. Its influence in society, in education, and as a public amusement, is elevating and refining. Large or small parties formed for the purpose of practising and enjoying music, are by all means to be encouraged in every class among us. But both musical taste and social intercourse would be improved if a distinction were established between musical soirées and ordinary evening parties. It would contribute to the satisfaction of all, and the relief of many, if,

as in the case of dancing, music were always announced on the card of invitation when it is intended that music shall be the chief engagement or entertainment of the evening.

After all, however, it is probable that the introduction of music is the consequence, as much as the cause, of the dulness and emptiness of our ordinary parties. It has been found necessary, in order to relieve the *ennui* which is experienced after the first hour or so, when everybody has arrived, and the weather and kindred topics having been thoroughly chattered out, it is universally felt that there is nothing to say, and nothing to do, so that the remedy for the "weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable" character of our social re-unions is not to be found in the mere relegation of music to strictly musical parties. That done, we shall only be as we were, unless some direct positive measures are devised and employed for eliciting and making available for general conversation the intelligence and information of effective talkers among the guests. Yet there would be something gained by the removal of a direct and recognised impediment, the object of its removal being understood. And if, besides, the numbers invited were in better proportion to the space in our drawing-rooms, so as to give more freedom of circulation and greater facilities of communication, and if some forethought and judgment were exercised as to the selection of the company, and some skilful management in their arrangement and collocation, we might hope that many who now never open their lips, except in meaningless gossip, would be found capable of taking their part in real talk, or would improve their capabilities if they knew there would be opportunity for employing them, and so the spirit and practice of true conversation be revived.

Bishop Butler, in the preface to his "Fifteen Sermons," speaks of the multitudes who "read merely for the sake of talking, or to qualify themselves for the world." His language leaves the impression that there was a greater range of subjects of conversation in his time—150 years ago—than in ours, and greater facility for the introduction of subjects in which people might be interested, and in which they think they could interest others. He, indeed, means by what he says to disparage the habit of reading in preparation for company; but this is only in contrast with real study for the purpose of acquiring knowledge. It may be questioned, however, whether they are not greater benefactors to their generation who read with a view to accumulate subjects and materials for social talk, than those who make none but themselves the wiser for anything that they read.

It has been found much easier to point out the hindrances than it would be to suggest helps to conversation, and the ways and means of encouraging it. And even if feasible plans and rules could be devised for the promotion of social communion by positive and active measures, it is doubtful whether the adoption of them, even by influential and well qualified persons, would have the desired effect. Formality, and a sense of restraint, would be as antagonistic to general and free conversation as the present anarchy. Too special and evident provision for the intellectual entertainment of the company would give the drawing-room the character of a lecture-hall, or stage; the majority would still be silent, feeling that all the talking is expected to be done by the recognised conversationists, or per-

formers for the evening. But some hope of a change for the better in the tone and style of our ordinary friendly meetings may be founded on the very prevalent dissatisfaction with the existing state of things, and on the reasonable expectation that the practical, earnest, serious spirit of our age will exercise an influence over this as well as other departments of our domestic life. It is an anomaly and anachronism that, in modern assemblages of intelligent and well-educated persons, the principal subjects of talk should be the weather, relationships, acquaintanceships, likenesses, births, deaths, and marriages. General conversation on topics of general interest, and worth discussion, must, one would fain believe, again become practicable and popular in society. Social intercourse must not be permitted to mean, as it too commonly does, merely social concourse, but will, we trust, be understood in its true character, as affording opportunity for real interchange of opinion and knowledge. "Such sort of conversation," says the good and wise bishop already mentioned, "unites men closer in alliances and friendships, gives us a fellow feeling of the prosperity and unhappiness of each other, and is in several respects serviceable to virtue, and to encourage good behaviour in the world; and though it has no particular good tendency, yet it has a general good one; it is social, and friendly, and tends to promote humanity, good nature, and civility."

OYSTERS.

A WELL-KNOWN dealer in London, writing just before the close of last oyster season, says:—"The market price for natives has within the past week reached the fabulous sum of £12 per bushel. It may be fairly assumed that the season is virtually at an end, but it must not be supposed that it is because oysters are at something like the price of mackerel—three for one shilling. The reason is, unfortunately, but too palpable—the beds have become nearly exhausted, and with but very little or no prospect of their being stocked again to any extent for some years to come. Native brood and last season's spat, averaging the size of a threepenny piece, are now being sold by the dredgerman at 6s. per hundred. Before these oysters are fit for consumption they must lie on the beds for at least four years. After making allowance for mortality, which is certain to a lesser or greater degree—extreme heat or extreme cold is fatal to many—and the depredations of the numerous enemies to which the oyster is subject, what price, we would ask, must be charged by the oyster merchant to compensate him for his expense and labour in bringing these nurselings to a condition of maturity?"

"Notwithstanding the scarcity of natives, which has been plainly foreseen for some time, a constant drain has been going on through the past season to supply foreign markets, and many hundreds of bushels have been shipped, to our knowledge, from Whitstable, Burnham, Colchester, and the immediate neighbourhood—in fact, the consumption abroad has been much greater than at home.

"Such facilities of transport now exist that, incredible as it may seem, it is scarcely less difficult to procure English natives in St. Petersburg than it is

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in the heart of our own metropolis. Looking at these undisputed facts, we have no hesitation in asserting that in two years' time native oysters will be retailed in London at 6d. each. Surely something should be done, or at least attempted. We know perfectly well that legislation will not make oysters, but it may enforce such restrictions and regulations as will give the native at least a chance of redeeming its character. One of the first and most important acts, we would venture to suggest, would be a law to compel dredgers to return to the sea all brood caught under a certain size. There exists to this day in the coast town of Brightlingsea a silver gauge in the form of an oyster. It was the duty of the water bailiff to see that all oysters of a lesser size were immediately thrown back again to grow, and we can see no reason why this simple and sensible test should not still be continued and acted upon. The next suggestion, of scarcely less importance, is the prohibition of the sale of oysters between the 1st of May and the 1st of September (the months without R in them). This should not, however, apply to the sale of oysters by dredgers to the merchants, as all practical men are agreed that the more the ground is worked before spawning time the clearer it will become, and the better chance for the spat when it falls, which is usually about the first or second week in June."

The writer concludes by affirming that, if decisive steps are not taken, it will soon be necessary to pay a visit to the British Museum to see a specimen of a real "English native."

While we have these forebodings in the "Times" as to English oysters, we find in the "New York Times" of the same date the following notes as to the spread of oyster-culture and oyster-eating in America:—

"It was in almost the very first car devoted to business that crossed the Pacific Railroad that the luscious oyster of the Atlantic sped onward to satisfy the longings of California. That train passed through Sacramento, and on one special car was emblazoned the legend, 'The oyster of the East comes to greet the mouth of the West.' There was an election in Sacramento that day; the polls were neglected while an eager crowd rushed to see the car. From this single car came the oyster business in California, and efforts to introduce oysters in the waters of the Golden Gate. The originator of this enterprise was Mr. A. Booth, of Chicago, who now plants many thousands of bushels of Northern oysters yearly in the Pacific. Some interesting facts are given by Mr. Booth in regard to the changes oysters coming from the North undergo in California. Though spat is undoubtedly produced, such young oysters do not thrive. As yet no small oysters, the children of the Northern oysters, have been found. In California the Northern transplanted oyster loses its oval or round shape and lengthens out. The Northern oysters planted in San Francisco Bay are put out in four to five feet of water, and mature and fatten rapidly in from six to twelve months. In New York Bay this takes from two to four years. Every year Mr. Booth takes across the continent some 400 car-loads of small oysters, to be brought up in the Pacific. When such transplanted oysters have their growth, they are worth some 2 dols. to 2 dols. 50c. per hundred. The native oyster coming from Oregon is small in size, and has the coppery flavour of the European bivalve. They are not much in demand, selling at 2 dols. the sack of a bushel and a half.

There are some peculiarities as to the character or origin of the oyster to be transplanted. It would be supposed that oysters coming from the Chesapeake or from Norfolk would be better adapted to the warmer waters of the Pacific. But this is not the case. Such oysters when carried there, Mr. Booth affirms from his own experience, will not live. His oysters always come from Egg Harbour, Raritan Bay, Newark, and Long Island Sound. More Southern seed invariably dies. There is a limit to the growth of any kind of Eastern oyster in the Pacific waters. After a certain period, a year and a half at the utmost, for some reason as yet not well understood—perhaps the meat becoming too large for the shell planted—the oysters die. A great deal of precaution is necessary in guarding these planted oysters. A fence of pickets six inches apart is placed round the Californian Oyster Park. The enemies of the oyster are the stingarees and the starfish. At low tide the oyster shepherd goes in and kills such marine wolves as may be devouring his flock."

Varieties.

SPELLING "BEE."—This entertainment is at present very popular in America. A "Bee" is a gathering for any purpose—"Harvest Bees," "Corn-husking Bees," and so on. The report of one held at Philadelphia for a charitable object will explain the novel application of such gatherings:—"The most elaborate 'Spelling Bee' in this part of the country was held at the Academy of Music, in Philadelphia, on the evening of the 25th of March, at least 4,000 people crowding the auditorium. The novelty of the thing and the belief of many that they could beat the 'champions' added to the attractions, and hundreds were left outside the building who could not possibly get in. There were eighty competitors for the six prizes offered—forty ladies and forty gentlemen—the majority of them being school teachers, and at 8 p.m. they marched in procession upon the stage. The announcement was made that the proceeds of the entertainment would be devoted to the building fund of a new building for the Young Men's Christian Association of this city, and after some musical and literary selections the 'bee' began. The following were the rules:—

"First. The class will be composed of an equal number of ladies and gentlemen, who will occupy opposite sides of the stage.

"Second. Webster's Unabridged Dictionary will be the standard.

"Third. The spelling will be oral.

"Fourth. Words spelt more than one way by Webster will be omitted.

"Fifth. No word will be used consecutively.

"Sixth. One word misspelled rules the misspeller out.

"Seventh. Any competitor misunderstanding a word may ask one repetition if no attempt at spelling the word has been previously made."

"A teacher of elocution gave out the words in a loud voice, the audience watching with close attention. 'Difference,' 'dialogue,' 'corrigible,' 'chirography,' 'alibi,' 'aggregate,' and 'varioid' were announced one after another and were all spelt correctly, a lady and gentleman being alternately selected. Then 'musketeer' fell to the lot of a young lady, who spelt it 'muscateer,' when a roar from the audience announced her failure, and she blushing stepped out of the class. A dozen more words were spelt correctly, when 'excitation' brought down the first young man, who made a dash at it with 'excei' and got no further, as the shouts of the audience drowned his voice. 'Gourmand' spoilt the fortune of another man. Then there was some correct spelling until 'duellist' came along, and, of course, killed his man, who was uncertain about the 'l's'; 'benison' acquired a new meaning for a lady; 'chloroform' quieted a youth; 'peregrination' was what the next champion performed, and 'tympan' was too discordant for a lady's ears. The class seemed to be getting demoralised, so

rapidly were victims stricken down. 'Inconceivable,' 'financial,' 'tween,' and 'anglicise' each laid out a speller; and then a discussion arose about the pronunciation of the elocutionist who gave out the words. . . . Now were left three ladies and one gentleman, but they survived but a short time, 'distention' being too much for the man, and 'infinitesimal' and 'hauser' for two women. 'A lady, as usual, had the last word, remaining alone on the stage, and to her, amid loud applause, was awarded the first prize. The three ladies who got the highest prizes were all Philadelphia school-teachers. The gentleman who survived the longest was called upon for a speech, and said that he came from Pottsville, in the interior of Pennsylvania, and, 'although from the country, could spell with any man in the State.' At a late hour the audience dispersed, there being much gratification expressed at the amusement afforded and much criticism at the way the affair was managed. The 'Spelling Bee,' however, brought in a large sum, and was a success in this, if not as a 'spell.'

VESTMENTS SYMBOLIC OF DOCTRINE.—As there is sometimes quibbling and duplicity as to the real object of Ritualists in wearing their foolish garments, the following extract from the evidence of the Rev. Mr. Bennett, of Frome, one of the most conspicuous of them, is worthy of notice. He was examined before the Ritual Commission on the subjects of the vestments:—"What is the doctrine involved in your using the chasuble?—The doctrine of the sacrifice. Do you consider yourself a sacrificing priest?—Yes. In fact, *sacerdos*, a sacrificing priest?—Distinctly so. Then you think you offer a propitiatory sacrifice?—Yes, I think I do offer a *propitiatory sacrifice*. [In the use of vestments.] You do not contend, then, for any æsthetic purpose, but simply for a doctrinal purpose?—Decidedly; the æsthetic purpose forms an accident afterwards, but is not the object. The object is to convey religious impressions, and to guard religious doctrine?—Yes. Are these doctrines accurately expressed in these words—'the real objective presence of our Blessed Lord, the sacrifice offered by the priest, and the adoration due to the presence of our Blessed Lord'?—Yes." Some rather startling proofs of the progress of Ritualism in London and the suburbs may be gathered from "Mackeson's Guide." It appears from the data given by this publication that Eucharistic vestments are now worn in 36 churches against 30 in 1874, incense is burnt in 17 churches against 14 last year, and altar candles for ceremonial purposes in 53 as against 36 churches.

IRISH CONVICT SYSTEM.—There recently appeared in the "Leisure Hour" a paragraph on the Irish Convict System, in which reference was made to the labours of the Howard Association as being partly directed towards efforts "to engraft upon our prison management the best features of that system." The secretary of the association, Mr. Tallack, informs us that whilst it is correct that the committee of that body are earnest advocates of certain features of the Irish system, as the plan of giving good "marks" to deserving prisoners and the encouragement of useful industrial labour by convicts, yet the paragraph as it stands in the "Leisure Hour" is calculated to convey a somewhat mistaken impression unless qualified. Three years ago Mr. Tallack visited all the Irish convict prisons, including Spike Island, near Cork, where the convicts spend the greater portion of their time. The impressions received during that visit as to the evils of the congregated or gang system adopted at Spike Island, and confirmed by much subsequent information, have induced the Howard Association, on many occasions since, to qualify, to a large extent, any published approbation of the Crofton system. The best penologists of Belgium, Germany, and other countries, have also of late manifested an increasing hesitancy as to their acceptance and approval of that system. A man who was hanged at Mayo in the present year, 1875, for murder, and who had spent ten years at Spike Island, declared just before his execution, "There is more villainy practised in Spike Island prison than in any other part of Ireland." It is true that a great decrease of prisoners has taken place in Irish convict prisons of late years. But an equal diminution has simultaneously taken place in the Irish county and borough gaols, where the distinctive principles of the Crofton system have never been adopted. It is the vast emigration from Ireland (two million emigrants in a few years) to which the diminution in Irish crime must necessarily be ascribed, as causing a rise of wages, a consequent diminution of poverty and temptation, and also the removal of many troublesome persons to America. A Philadelphia journal (dated April 17, 1875) says that it is a "mistake" to pronounce the Crofton system superior to the Pennsylvania and Belgian systems, in which the prisoners are carefully separated from mutual corrup-

tion. The same journal states that many of the Irish convicts get recommitted to American prisons, and adds of its own local penitentiary, "Fifty graduates of the Irish penal institutions are known to have been in our Eastern (Philadelphia) Prison, bearing with them certificates of good conduct!" Hence the unqualified praise of the Irish system sometimes uttered must be received *cum grano*, especially as most of the writers on this system have never personally visited Spike Island, which is the chief centre of its operations.

PAINT FOR THE BOTTOMS OF SMALL YACHTS.—Take of good black paint 8 lb., and add half-a-pint of coach-builders' varnish. This dries quickly, and has a fine hard glassy surface. Another good mixture is made by adding five gallons of boiled oil and five gallons of quick oil varnish to 1 cwt. of Astbury's patent oxide of iron paint.

SCHOOL BOARD VISITORS.—At the opening of the new public elementary schools in Pritchard's Road, Hackney Road, Sir Charles Reed said that there had been some reports in the newspapers lately of cases of alleged cruelty on the part of School Board visitors. He could answer for the members of their Board that there was not one of them that would not desire to work the Act in the most merciful way, but there were two reasons why children did not go to school. One was the poverty of the parent, and the other the neglect of the parent. Now in the case of poverty, the Board had the power to remit the fee or to pay the fee of the child in any school the parent selected, but then there were neglectful parents who would not allow their children to have the advantages granted to them by the State, and who, upon very small pretexts, kept their children away from school. The School Board was instituted to protect these children. They had no right to see a child neglected, and therefore they said to the parent, "There is the law; and if you cannot obey it from want of means, we will help you to do so." He could only say that the visitors were not selected from the same class as the police. They did not want the police going into people's houses dragging out reluctant children. So far as they could they employed females, because they could go and talk to the mother, through whom they could influence the father of a family. All the visitors were chosen from the same class as those amongst whom they visited, and in most places, especially in this district, he could say that the visitors possessed the confidence and sympathy of those whom they visited, and they managed to do by persuasion what could not have been done by compulsion. No doubt there had been some cases in which application to magistrates had been found necessary, but almost entirely by persuasion the parents had been induced to send their children to school. He thought that a body of visitors who had been able to add 120,000 children to the school roll of London ought to be thanked for it. Of course there were men who would occasionally speak a rough word and use their authority indiscreetly, but the main body could hardly be responsible for that, nor could the School Board itself. The visitors were charged to do their work kindly, but as firmly as possible. He only mentioned the subject because certain statements had been made in the public papers, and the School Board received, with great respect, criticism upon their action. They were not aware of any wilful hardship or cruel conduct on the part of their visitors. If it were so, it would be a matter that would claim the instant investigation of the School Board.

PERILS OF THE BUSH.—Many amongst the hundreds who have perished in the Australian bush (says the "Glen Innes Examiner") for the want of water and food, might now be living had they but known in what a very simple mode life may be sustained by the explorer under the most trying circumstances. An individual well experienced in the matter, thus writes:—"No man need die for want of water or food in the bush whilst he holds an axe or tomahawk. Any man may find sufficient water, let the earth be ever so parched up, by clearing round the box-tree in particular, or any other tree; then provide a hollow sheet of bark, cut the roots in lengths, stand them on a slant in the covey, or bark, the top end leaning against the tree, and you may in such wise soon boil your billy. For subsistence the common fern roots may be washed clean and roasted, and a man may live for months on them." Again, we have been aware for many years of a very simple method of obtaining water or sap in any timbered portion of the bush. Cut down saplings and trim off their heads a foot or two down, and place that end, inverted from the way they grow, into a billy, tin dish, or hollow piece of bark, when, in a short period, a copious supply of fluid will be obtained, not by any means objectionable to the palate, and possessing strengthening qualities in a far greater degree than water.

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